

How can physical activity help me take care of my diabetes?

Physical activity and keeping a healthy weight can help you take care of your diabetes and prevent diabetes problems. Physical activity helps your blood **glucose**,* also called blood sugar, stay in your target range.

Physical activity also helps the hormone **insulin** absorb glucose into all your body's cells, including your muscles, for energy. Muscles use glucose better than fat does. Building and using muscle through physical activity can help prevent high blood glucose. If your body doesn't make enough insulin, or if the insulin doesn't work the way it should, the body's cells don't use glucose. Your blood glucose levels then get too high, causing diabetes.

Starting a physical activity program can help you lose weight or keep a healthy weight and keep your blood glucose levels on target. Even without reaching a healthy weight, just a 10 or 15 pound weight loss makes a difference in reducing the risk of diabetes problems. Read more about how to prevent diabetes problems in the Prevent Diabetes Problems Series at www.diabetes.niddk.nih.gov.

*See the Pronunciation Guide for tips on how to say the words in **bold** type.